



WARTIME PHOTO is almost only one existing of Gen. Reinhard Gehlen.

## Gehlen Claims Bormann Was Soviet Agent

By HENRY RAYMONT

NEW YORK (NYT) — A manuscript described as the memoirs of Gen. Reinhard Gehlen, former head of the West German intelligence service, claims that Martin Bormann, Hitler's top lieutenant, was a Soviet agent during World War II. It also says that after the war Bormann became an adviser on German policy in the Soviet Union and that he died there less than three years ago.

These assertions about the Nazi leader, who was last seen leaving Hitler's bunker in April 1945, are contained in a forthcoming book which Gehlen is said to have written since his retirement in 1968. The book is reported to be commanding offers approaching \$1 million for world publication rights.

The memoirs discount previous accounts of Bormann's fate, which presumed him either to have died outside Hitler's bunker in Berlin or to be hiding in South America.

In fact, the memoirs say, as the Russians closed in on the bunker, the Nazi leader crossed their lines and gained sanctuary in the Soviet Union. The information is attributed to a series of "unimpeachable" reports, presumably from Gehlen's agents in Russia, the last of which, reporting the death, reaching him in 1969.

Bormann was tried and sentenced to death in absentia by the international war crimes tribunal in Nuernberg in 1946. He was officially listed as dead in 1954, but 14 years later the West German government posted a \$25,000 re-

ward for his capture.

The account of Bormann's double role is one of many details of East-West intrigue in the reminiscences of Gehlen, who, after being chief intelligence officer of the Wehrmacht on the Russian front, was recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency and eventually rose to director of the Bundes Nachrichten-Dienst, West Germany's secret service.

The existence of the memoirs — and negotiations for the manuscript's sale by a small West German publishing house — became known here during the past few days.

An announcement is expected this week that bids for the world rights to the manuscript outside Germany have been made by the World Publishing Co., a subsidiary of the Times-

Mirror Company of Los Angeles, and Avon Books, a paperback publisher owned by the Hearst Corporation. The publishing house of William Collins of London is also known to have offered \$100,000 for British rights.

According to information assembled from publishers here and in West Germany, the Gehlen memoirs were first offered for sale early this year by Volker Hansen, director of Hase & Koehler, a small publishing house in Mainz known for books on military subjects. Hansen, whose father was a German intelligence officer during World War II, said he held power of attorney for Gehlen.

Over the last three months, several American and British publishers have

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gone to Mainz, where they were shown up to three chapters of the 12-chapter manuscript. Requests to visit Gehlen at his home in Bavaria were turned down on the grounds that he wished to remain secluded during the negotiations but that he intended to make public appearances to promote the book after its publication.

Publishing sources, both here and in West Germany, assert they have confirmed the reliability of the material through persons close to the intelligence services of both countries.

Martin P. Levin, chairman of the

contains a detailed analysis of Soviet political and military goals for the next two decades, as well as an urgent plea for a Western military buildup to contain Communist expansion.

The argument for a tougher policy of containment suggests that the publication of the memoirs is certain to be welcomed by the foes of West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's "Ostpolitik," his policy to improve relations with the Soviet bloc.

This is the reason given by German publishing sources why the German newspaper serial rights were acquired by "Die Welt," whose owner, Axel Springer, is an influential critic of the Brandt government. "Die Welt" is reported to have paid \$250,000 for the serial rights.

Rudiger Freiherr von Wechmar, Brandt's spokesman, said in Bonn Saturday that the government had not been aware of the impending serialization of the Gehlen memoirs. He said, however, that high officials had known about the existence of "an alleged Gehlen manuscript" and were investigating whether there had been any violation of laws restraining former civil servants from revealing state secrets.

## Unpublished Materials

A portion of the text of the memoirs, including the account of the Bormann case, was distributed by Hansen as evidence that Gehlen's book would contain important and hitherto unpublished materials.

The memoirs say that the revelations about Bormann, the man Hitler had named as his successor, "offer the key to one of the most enigmatic cases of our century."

The author says that he first heard suspicions voiced about Bormann in a private conversation in 1941 with Adm. Wilhelm Canaris, head of the Nazi counterespionage service, who was executed for his role in the July plot of 1944 to assassinate Hitler.

According to the memoirs, although Bormann was believed to have ties to "Die Rote Kapelle," the famous Soviet espionage cell in Nazi Germany, the Nazi leader was never placed under surveillance for fear that he would use his influence with Hitler to destroy the intelligence service.

Gehlen is represented in his memoirs as saying: "My own investigation could begin only after 1946, when I was able to examine the mysterious circumstances of Bormann's flight from Hitler's bunker in Berlin, and his disappearance. My inquiry, which became immensely difficult, always ended at one point: Nobody had seen Bormann's corpse after the Reichsteiler (Bormann) was seen walking in the direction of the Soviet lines."

"When sensational press reports after the war sought to report various 'resurrections' (of Bormann), I did not break my silence. Nevertheless, I sought to trace all kinds of information. Two reports, which reached me personally, convinced me in the 1950s that Bormann was alive. He was, according to these reports, in the Soviet Union, working under an impenetrable cover.

"According to further information, which I viewed as highly reliable, the former Reichsteiler was acting as adviser to the Soviets on all questions concerning German policy. Only after my retirement from active duty did I establish from one source — which cannot be disclosed — that Bormann died some two years ago in the Soviet Union."

Gehlen, who made his reputation as an analyst of Soviet strategy on the Russian front, went underground as the war ended to surrender with his entire staff to Gen. George S. Patton's 3rd

Army with an offer to cooperate with the victors.

In 1947, the newly created CIA authorized him to establish a full-scale German intelligence organization, which he staffed largely with professionals from the disbanded SS security service and the Wehrmacht intelligence agencies.

The Gehlen memoirs reportedly assert that for 23 years he was paid \$6 million a year by the U.S. to conduct his espionage operation against the Russians.

Levin said that the authenticity of the manuscript had been verified by Peter Rittner, World's chief editor, with the help of George Bailey, an author formerly connected with U.S. military intelligence in Germany, when the two men visited Mainz late last month. Two years ago, Rittner, then working for the Macmillan Company, was the editor of Albert Speer's "Inside the Third Reich," a best-seller that is said to have contributed to Gehlen's decision to issue his own memoirs.



Martin Bormann

board of World Publishing, said: "We are totally convinced that the memoirs are authentic. We are equally convinced that they will create an international sensation."

The 69-year-old general's fear of reprisals against his family and reluctance to have his views used in internal West German political controversies are reasons given, by persons who claim to be familiar with his thinking, for Gehlen's continued reluctance to receive visitors.

If this has indeed been Gehlen's attitude, recent information about the manuscript indicates a drastic change. For, in addition to describing wartime and cold-war intelligence operations, it